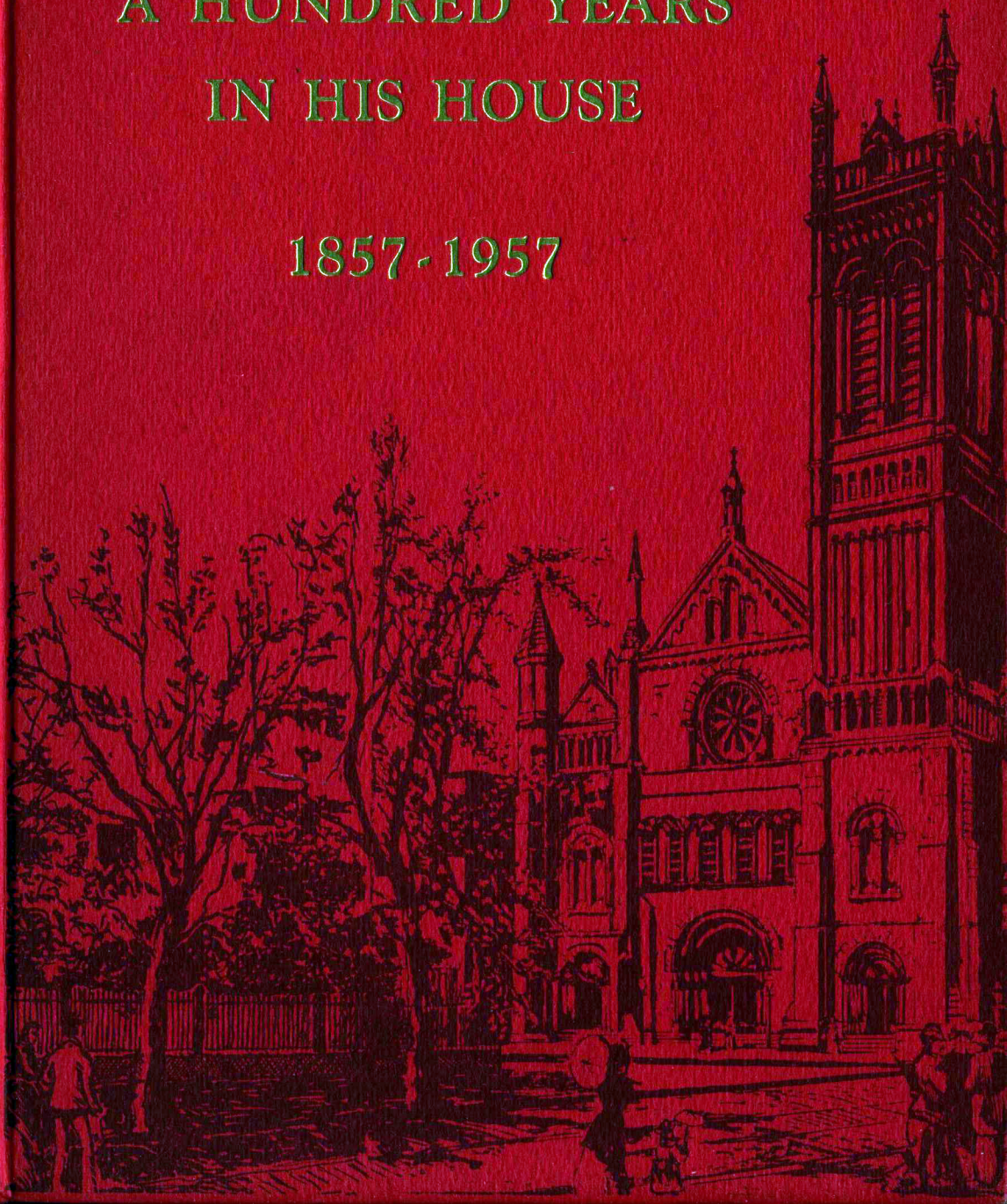


A HUNDRED YEARS
IN HIS HOUSE

1857-1957



A HUNDRED YEARS IN HIS HOUSE

The Story of
THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY
ON RITTENHOUSE SQUARE

PHILADELPHIA

1857-1957



By
MARGUERITE ASPINWALL

Decorated by
JACK BOWLING

Copyright 1956 by
THE RECTOR, CHURCHWARDENS, AND VESTRYMEN OF
THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, PHILADELPHIA

Made in the United States of America

1857 - 1957

Except the Lord build the house,
their labour is but lost that build it.



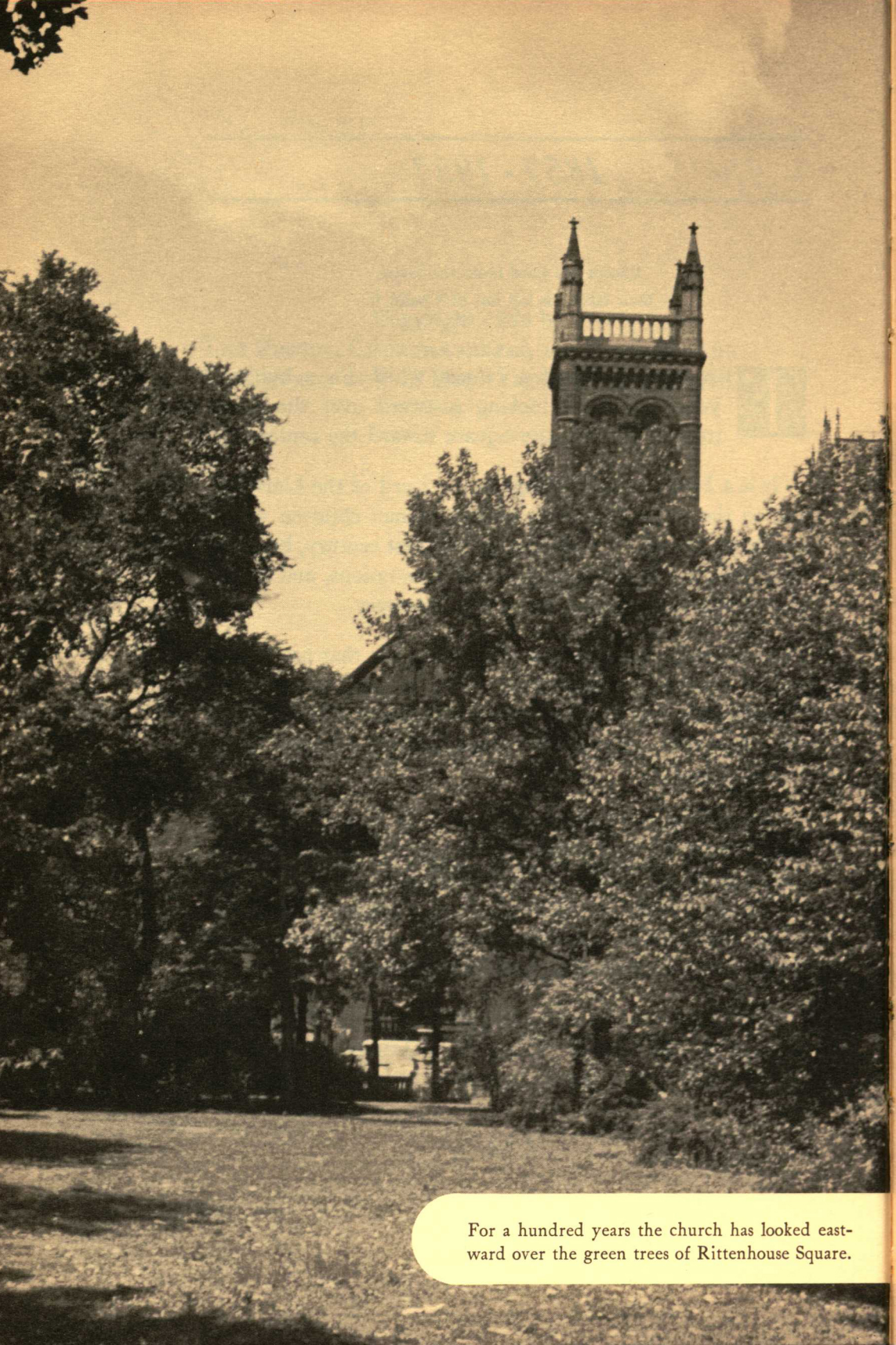
THIS is the story of a House, which for a hundred years has stood looking eastward over the green trees of Rittenhouse Square toward the center city.

It is a House which belongs to the Lord of the Universe, and to the many thousands of His human children whose feet have crossed its threshold in that past century, bringing their joys, griefs, fears, hopes, and frustrations, and laying them down in the quiet peace of His Sanctuary.

Inescapably, it is also the story of an era that has passed and of another era beginning. It is, in part, the story of Philadelphia, and of those stately old homes which used to ring the green oasis of Rittenhouse Square enclosed in its locked railing.

The railing has long since gone, and most of the great houses have, by the century's end, given place to the cliff dwellings of tall hotels and apartment houses that now hem the Square in like a small valley, still shaded by fine old trees, still with its winding walks, its green benches, and the ubiquitous armies of squirrels and pigeons.

It is all part of that hundred years of history which is the heritage of The Church of The Holy Trinity, and history, in order that it may not be lost, must be written down . . .



For a hundred years the church has looked eastward over the green trees of Rittenhouse Square.

1857 - 1859

THE HOUSE IS BUILT

IT begins with the laying of a cornerstone and a bishop's prayer, which we find described in the stilted newspaper phrasing of the day, in an old *Public Ledger* for May 26, 1857, still preserved in the Free Library on Logan Square:

"NEW CHURCH EDIFICE CORNERSTONE LAID

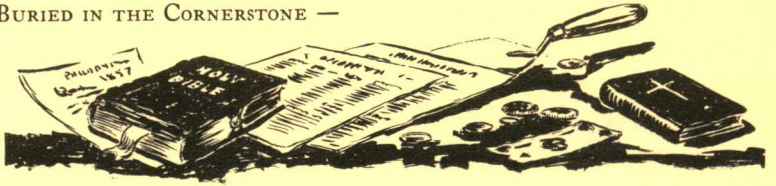
"The west end of the city is about to be improved by the erection of another elegant church edifice, the cornerstone of which was laid yesterday afternoon, on Walnut Street, west of Rittenhouse Square. It is to be called The Church of The Holy Trinity, to be built in the Norman style, of brown stone, having a front of 88 feet, including the tower and steeple, and a depth of 164 feet. The principal front is on Rittenhouse Square, and will be highly ornamental.

"The steeple is designed to be 225 feet high, and the tower 84 feet to the base of the spire . . . In the rear of the church edifice will be the schoolhouse, of 32 feet depth, which will obviate the necessity for a basement. The architect is Mr. John Notman.

"At the cornerstone laying Bishop Potter officiated, assisted by a number of clergymen. There are deposited in the stone a copy of the Bible, Book of Common Prayer, a number of periodicals of the day, and coins of the United States.

"After the cornerstone had been laid, the Bishop struck it three times with a hammer, and said: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. I lay the cornerstone of an edifice to be erected by the name of The Church of The Holy Trinity, and to be devoted to the service of Almighty God, agreeable to the principles of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in its doctrines, ministry, liturgy, rites and usages.

BURIED IN THE CORNERSTONE —



“Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ; Who is God over all, blessed for evermore, and in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Amen.”

“Other services followed, closing with the benediction. The attendance was quite large, and much interest was manifested in the ceremony.

“Immediately prior to the laying of this cornerstone, the Bishop officiated at the laying of a cornerstone of a Sunday school chapel, at 22nd and Locust Streets, which is designed to be connected with The Church of The Holy Trinity. Upon its erection it will be used by the congregation until the church edifice is finished.”

The reference to the great height of the spire above the tower may puzzle some readers, after looking at the church as it stands today.

In December, 1866, while Phillips Brooks was Rector, a serious dispute arose about the advisability of carrying out the original plan to put a steeple on the church. Mr. Brooks (he was not *Dr.* Brooks then) was strongly opposed to the spire, and in a letter written at that date to his father in Boston, remarks: “I have just broken my head against my Vestry in an attempt to put a tower harmonious and solid on my church. I have failed. It is to be a spire, taller than anything in town; not bad and not good.”

Later, to his great satisfaction, the spire was discovered to be impractical, and the beautiful tower we know at this Centennial time stands as Phillips Brooks hoped it would.

We have spoken of the laying of the cornerstone as the beginning of The Church of The Holy Trinity. And yet, perhaps it was not actually the beginning, after all, since for several years prior to that day a group of men had been earnestly considering the need for a church in the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood.

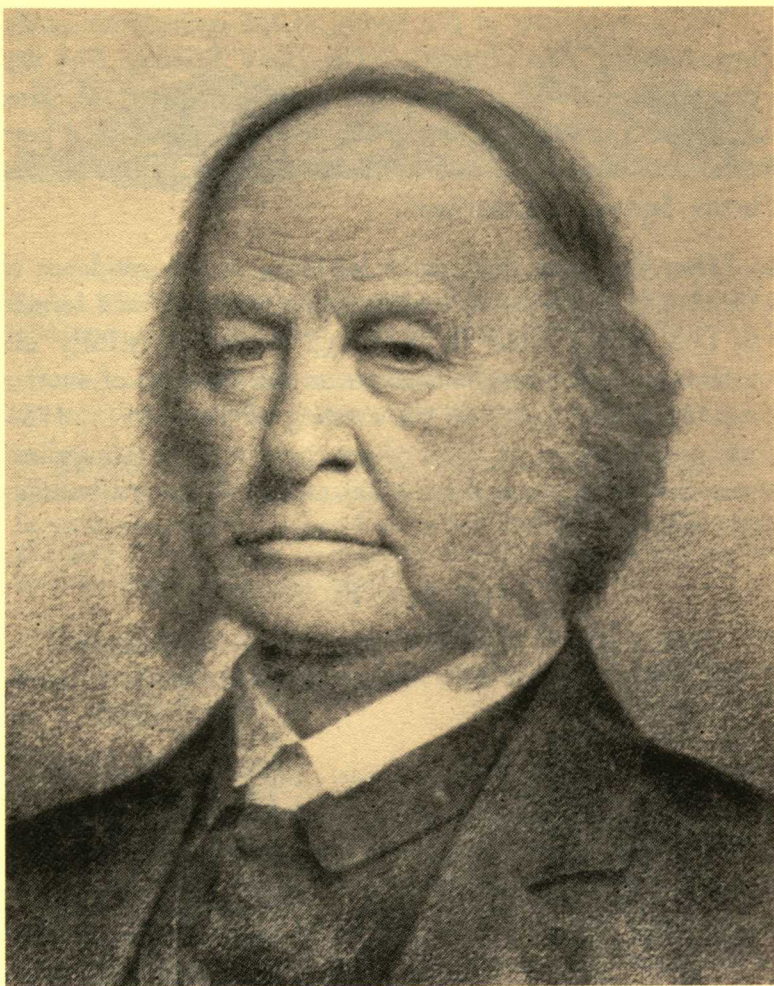
They had met first, early in 1855, at the residence of Dr. J. Cheston Morris, where a committee had been formed to raise subscriptions for building. How successfully this committee had wrought is shown in the Minutes of another meeting a year later, on the evening of January 15, 1856, where the names of thirty-three contributors are inscribed, who had each given from \$500 to \$5000 toward building the new church.

THEY BUILT HIS HOUSE

John Bohlen	Thomas H. Powers
John & William Welsh	Harry Conrad
John Grigg	William P. Cresson
John D. Jones	John Rice
Asa Whitney & Sons	Lemuel Coffin
Isaac L. Waterman	John M. Hale
William R. Lejee	Edward R. Rowley
Samuel Leonard	R. W. D. Truitt
J. Cheston Morris, M.D.	John D. Taylor
L. Montgomery Bond	Mrs. Rebecca Grumbes
Zebulon Locke	Mordecai D. Lewis
Francis Wharton	David B. Taylor
Charles Harbert	Alexander Henry
John Boulton	Thomas B. Wattson
George F. Peabody	Samuel V. Merrick
Caleb Jones	Edmund Yard

Hon. George D. Woodward

Fifty years later, in 1907, when the church celebrated its golden anniversary, Dr. Morris was asked to write an



The Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D.
First Rector of The Church of The Holy Trinity

(Quoted from his letter of acceptance, Aug. 3, 1858)

. . . I write to announce my acceptance of your invitation, with my most earnest prayer that He, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, will vouchsafe to sanctify our future connection.

historical sketch of this early planning and building period; and since he recalls it so clearly for us, it seems we can certainly do no better than to borrow his own words:

"Our committee consisted of Messrs. Lemuel Coffin, John M. Hale, L. Montgomery Bond, Samuel Leonard, and myself. Our meetings continued during the ensuing spring and summer. The reports were more and more encouraging, so that the committee felt itself obliged during the autumn to secure lots and to add to the amount of the subscriptions.

"Lots were secured at the northwest corner of the Square, which was then being surrounded by many notable residences, such as that of Mr. Parrish at the northwest corner of Nineteenth Street and the Square, and those of Mr. John Hare Powell at the northeast corner (afterward occupied by Alexander Brown), of John Grigg below this, of Mr. William R. Lejee, of Mr. Edwards (subsequently occupied by Mr. Kortright, the British Consul), and of Joseph Harrison, Jr., looking eastward over the gardens of the row houses on Locust Street which were thrown open to their tenants as a private park.

"In the same way, on the south side, were buildings which foreshadowed the future magnificence and desirability of the Square as a residential center; while along the west were the residences of Charles Gibbons, John Fallon, and Fairman Rogers.

" . . . The future congregation was to be composed largely of members of Grace Church, St. Philip's, St. James's, St. Andrew's, St. Luke's, and The Epiphany, from which contributions of men and money flowed freely; while associated with them were many prominent citizens who were establishing themselves in Philadelphia, such as Judge Woodward, and others.

"After earnest consultation, a charter was obtained for the new parish . . . Plans for the church were offered by Mr. Notman for \$40,000. But when it became evident that we intended to build, other plans were suggested at a cost of \$104,000, and even \$114,000. But it was deemed best that we should not go beyond the amount subscribed, and finally the plan offered by Mr. Notman was adopted, providing for the erection of a church substantially such as we now occupy, at an expense of \$63,000, including the chapel and lecture room in the rear."

Next in importance was the election of the first rector, and a vestry meeting was held on April 9, 1858, at the

residence of Mr. Welsh, to consider the matter. They decided unanimously on the Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D. D., at that time Rector of St. Paul's, in Boston; and the two Wardens, Lemuel Coffin and John Bohlen, with the Hon. George D. Woodward, were appointed a committee to present the call to Dr. Vinton and request his acceptance.

The Rector's salary was fixed by the Vestry at \$4,500.

The next thing considered by the committee was the name to be given the new church, and those suggested were:

St. Paul's Church, Rittenhouse Square

Trinity Church, Rittenhouse Square

Church of St. Barnabas

St. John's Church, Rittenhouse Square

Church of St. Chrysostom

St. George's Church

St. Michael's Church

After carefully considering all suggestions, an informal ballot was taken at a subsequent meeting of the Building Committee in which nine members voted for *St. John's Church, Rittenhouse Square*, and eleven for *The Church of The Holy Trinity*. The latter name—originally suggested by Lemuel Coffin—was accordingly adopted.

1859

MEMORABLE FIRST OCCASIONS

FOR everyone there must have been several never-to-be-forgotten experiences when something beautiful came into their lives for the first time. Robert Louis Stevenson, writing from his home in Samoa, puts in this category "The first love, the first sunrise, and the first South Sea island."

Of course, he was a poet and weaver of romantic tales . . . But romantic or practical, according to their various dispositions, there must have been certain very moving and never-forgotten "first events" for that group of men and women, a hundred years ago, who had worked, prayed, and given generously to help build The Church of The Holy Trinity. And because these first occasions meant so much to them, it seems fitting to preserve the record as part of our heritage of church history:

The first Sunday the congregation worshiped together in their new church; the first marriage solemnized; the first time a little child was brought to the new font for baptism . . .

These things are all set down in the earliest Parish Register and in the Minutes of the Vestry, but the books are put away in the vault under the church—who ever reads them now?

It has been helpful in amplifying the old notes to turn occasionally to the newspapers of that date for a fuller

account. And for the first Sunday Morning Service on March 27, 1859, we quote in part from an article on the front page of *The Evening Bulletin* for March 28:

"The first Service in the church was held yesterday morning, and a very large congregation assembled, entirely filling the galleries as well as the lower floor. The Service was the ordinary Episcopal Morning Service, which was read by the Rector, Rev. Dr. Vinton, who also preached the sermon. It was a plain, forcible, and highly appropriate discourse. An afternoon Service followed at four o'clock, when another large assemblage was present.

"The music, under the direction of Mr. John A. Darling, the organist, was in excellent taste, consisting of the plain chants and well-known simple hymn tunes, in which all the congregation could join. Mr. Darling's organ playing is admirable and entirely suited to religious services. The choir is a quartet of good, well-trained voices.

"The accoustic qualities of the building were well tested yesterday, and the result was altogether satisfactory. Dr. Vinton's voice was heard in the most remote parts of the gallery and in every part of the church, with perfect distinctness."

The Parish Building, at 1904 Walnut Street, where it stands today, was finished almost four months before the main church, and Dr. Vinton first preached here, in the Lecture Room, on Advent Sunday, November 28, 1858, to crowded congregations at both morning and afternoon services.

The first bride in the church was Emma Matilda Kitchen, who was married by Dr. Vinton to Joseph Mortimer Davis, on April 19, 1859.

Whether it was a large wedding, with bridesmaids, ushers, and many guests, or a simple ceremony, the records do not state. But we do know they were the first couple married—just twenty-three days after the church was completed.

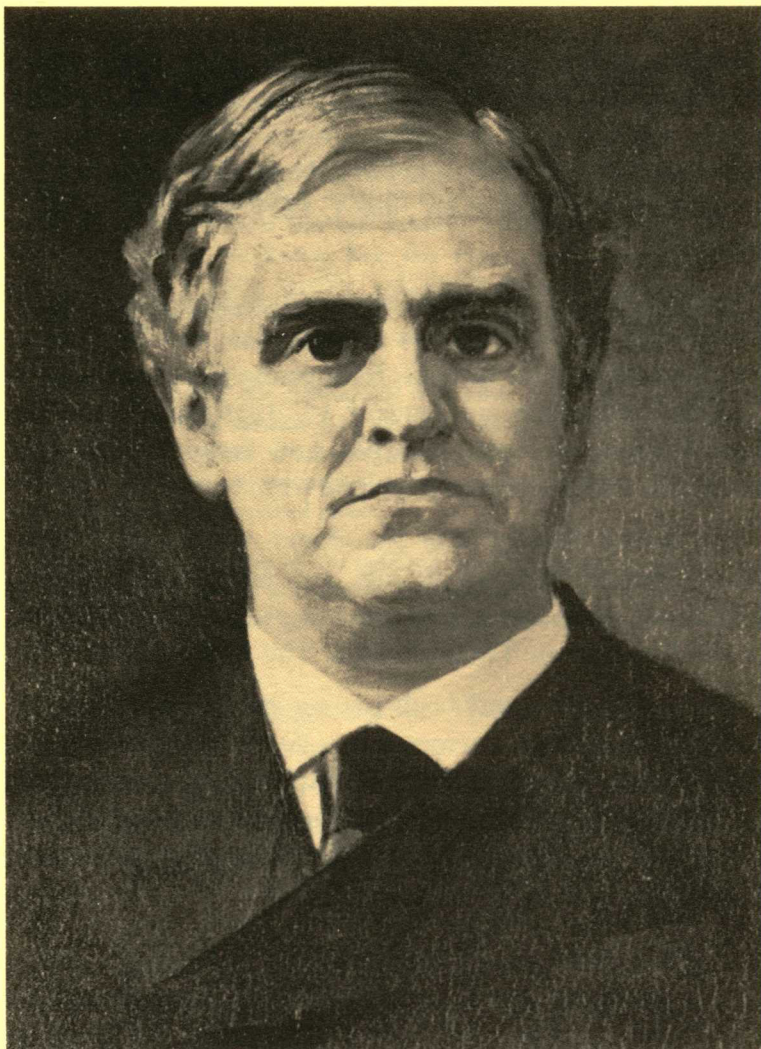
The earliest baptisms were—Richard Norris Williams, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Duane Williams, baptized by Dr. Vinton on December 23, 1858, three months before the church was opened; the other, James Alexander Porter, eight-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander James Porter, of Nashville, Tennessee, on June 5, 1859 in the new church building.

Typhoid fever—a dreaded scourge a century ago—caused the first two deaths in the new congregation, and Dr. Vinton conducted the funeral services: for a young girl of seventeen, Catherine Ashbridge, on January 15, 1859; and for Mrs. Sarah Benson, on April 19. We note these occasions for the record, and pass on to happier events . . .

The second Sunday after the church was opened, April 3, one hundred and twenty men and women knelt at the chancel rail to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for the first time in The Church of The Holy Trinity.

It is a pity this small book has not enough pages to list those one hundred and twenty names, for they were so woven into the early life of the church, that in doing the research for this history, we came upon them again and again, connected with all the various organizations and activities of the Parish.






(From a portrait hanging in the Parish House)

The Rev. Phillips Brooks, D.D., second Rector of The Church of The Holy Trinity, who wrote the beloved Christmas carol: "O Little Town of Bethlehem," for which Lewis H. Redner, organist of Holy Trinity, composed the music, 1868.

1859 - 1869

CIVIL WAR AND POSTWAR YEARS

HE first years of The Church of The Holy Trinity coincided with the rising clouds of civil war that were soon to overshadow the nation. But despite this, the congregation went seriously about the business of organizing their parish, under the able leadership of their first Rector.

In the words of Dr. J. Cheston Morris, whom we have quoted earlier, he was

“Faithful and true, broad and earnest, clear and convincing, with logical exactness laying down his premises and following them to their inevitable conclusion, he was indeed an intellectual giant. In stature he was six feet two, in manner agreeable and winning.”

In short, everyone felt they had chosen wisely, and looked forward to a long-continued association with their new minister.

In January of 1859, Sunday school and Bible classes were organized; and the Vestry Minutes for May 23 tell us that a committee had been appointed to act with the Rector in the purchase of a silver Communion service, to cost about \$600.

The following spring, a baptismal font was presented to the church by Mrs. Horner.

The year 1861, however, brought two crises to the people of The Church of The Holy Trinity: the actual outbreak

of war, and the resignation of Dr. Vinton, who had accepted a call to St. Mark's Church in New York—a decision influenced by his wife's failing health and the fact that the Philadelphia climate did not agree with her.

His successor was to be a young man named Phillips Brooks, who had attended St. Paul's Church in Boston from childhood, while Dr. Vinton was Rector there, and whom, when he was graduated from the seminary Dr. Vinton had invited to come to The Church of The Holy Trinity as his assistant minister.

Phillips Brooks had declined the offer, preferring to accept a call as Rector of The Church of The Advent, also in Philadelphia—a small, struggling parish, where he felt he would have more responsibility and opportunity to find himself. But during those years at The Church of The Advent Dr. Vinton had several times asked him to preach in Holy Trinity, where he had made a favorable impression on Vestry and congregation.

Now, when Dr. Vinton decided to leave them, their thoughts turned to Phillips Brooks for their second Rector.

The young Rector of The Church of The Advent had so endeared himself to his present congregation, however, that there was tremendous protest over the idea of his leaving, and at first he declined the offer. Later it was repeated, and being unable to ignore the greater opportunity for service offered him in the larger parish, he this time accepted the call.

But before going into the year 1862 and Phillips Brooks's ministry, we have not quite finished yet with 1861 and the

first intrusion of war into the life of Philadelphia and The Church of The Holy Trinity. This will be most graphically illustrated by quoting an eye-witness account—again in the words of Dr. Morris, who wrote it years later for the historical booklet compiled for the fiftieth anniversary of the church:

“When in 1861, the efforts of the United States Government to relieve the imprisoned garrison of Fort Sumter brought about its bombardment, I well recall the Sunday morning when the announcement was made that the first shots had been fired.

“I walked down the street with Mr. Coffin and Mr. Bohlen, and we purchased the first extras. That afternoon, before evening service, I requested Dr. Vinton to read the prayer of the Church ‘In Time of War and Tumult.’”

“He only asked me, ‘Are you prepared to call them your enemies?’ To which I replied, ‘Anyone who fires on the flag of my country is my enemy.’

“‘Then I will read the prayer,’ he said; which he accordingly did.

“I believe this was the first public occasion on which the Episcopal Church took an open stand in favor of law and order, in that great conflict.”

Since then there have been, of course, three wars—plus Korea—when similar prayers have been offered here in His Sanctuary; but that was the first time, and the “enemies” were our sister States—States which had given us such patriots as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and many, many more. They must have been a congregation with deeply troubled hearts who listened to that prayer on Sunday evening. Family quarrels are always the bitterest.

And so we come to the eventful year 1862, with Phillips Brooks entering upon the rectorship of The Church of The Holy Trinity on the first Sunday in January.

It is fortunate for the purposes of this history that he was a devoted son and wrote frequently to his family in Boston; for in these letters—as well as in certain excerpts from a diary he kept—we gain a sympathetic insight into the times, and into the life of the church of which he had so recently become Rector.

One letter, early in the first month of his ministry, declared, “I like them (my new people) more and more, the more I see of them. They are kind, cordial, and full of the will to work . . . ”

Within a few weeks he writes again, on a happy, triumphant note: “All is going swimmingly at the new church. Mr. Coffin tells me he rented the last pew on Saturday, and the church is all taken now for the first time. Yesterday I began my plan of having evening service once a month, with a service for children instead of the regular afternoon service. It went first-rate; both afternoon and evening were overcrowded. Our Wednesday evening lectures are always more than full . . . We are doing well, and have every reason to hope for the future.”

The overcrowded congregations he refers to were to become a feature of every service at which Phillips Brooks preached. Indeed, not only were all the pews filled, but chairs had to be set up in the aisles to accommodate the people who thronged to hear him.

Bishop Lawrence, in his *Life of Phillips Brooks*, describes him in words that draw for us a clear picture of the man and his ministry:

“The congregation increased, and then packed the great church two and three times a Sunday. The Wednesday evening lecture was transferred from the chapel to the church, and again it was packed. He preached in

other churches near by, and in various parts of the country; was elected to be professor in the Philadelphia Divinity School, and declining, raised among his people the endowment of a chair. Through it all he never lost his sense of proportion, or forgot relative values. He was the minister to the people of Holy Trinity: he carried them in his heart and prayers. He was at the bedside of the sick, and the center of happy social life. He worked hard and long, and put his hardest and most careful work into his sermons."

It was the crowding of the church, and the fact that all pews were privately owned or rented, that made him anxious to add a chapel to the parish. The accomplishment of this ambition was to be Holy Trinity Chapel.

This had originally been called the Cranmer Chapel, located at Twenty-second and Locust Streets; later, when the property was bought by The Church of The Holy Trinity the name was changed.

Though the chapel had been the plan of Phillips Brooks, the new, larger buildings made possible through the generous gifts of Mrs. Willstach, Mr. Coffin, and Mr. Bohlen, were not begun until 1873, in the time of Dr. Thomas A. Jagger's rectorship.

In 1863, Phillips Brooks was twenty-eight years old—so young to have already made a name for himself for his vigorous and eloquent preaching! In that year we come upon this amusing letter to his brother, written on his birthday: "I am twenty-eight years old. The melancholy day is over. I stood it as well as I could, but it depressed me, of course . . . I had my salary raised the other day. It is to be \$4,000, commencing with the first of January. The parish has gradually been getting stronger and stronger, and I am glad they feel able to do their duty by their beloved Rector, at a time when living is so high."



THE PHILLIPS BROOKS MEMORIAL PULPIT
Carved in the base are these words:
In loving memory of Phillips Brooks
He being dead, yet speaketh

The Civil War had a tremendous influence on Phillips Brooks. He hated the sin of slavery, and during his entire ministry in Philadelphia was active in promoting the welfare of the Negroes. In fact, he was so much beloved by them it used to be a standing joke among his friends that at any formal function the other guests might as well resign themselves to being ignored by the colored waiters, if Phillips Brooks were present.

In 1867 he founded the Sunday School for Colored People, out of which—years later in Dr. Floyd Tomkins' time—was to evolve the Phillips Brooks Memorial Chapel. Of this early Sunday school he writes enthusiastically to his father: "I have a hundred of the funniest little darkeys you ever saw. I wish you could hear them—they sing like larks."

It seems appropriate to mention at this point the resolutions passed by the Bethel Library and Historical Society of Washington after his death, "recalling his noble and brave words for freedom and enfranchisement in the dark days of the war . . . the prominent part he took in opening to us the streetcars of Philadelphia, and this at the risk of both personal violence and social ostracism."

When, in June, 1863, Penn's City of Brotherly Love was threatened by the approach of an invading Confederate force, we find this entry in Phillips Brooks's diary for June 28: "Lee's army is at Carlisle, only one hundred miles from Philadelphia, and yet the city is perfectly quiet, and a terrible apathy is keeping everyone idle, just waiting to be taken."

He felt the desperate urgency for waking the paralyzed population, and gathering together a band, one hundred

strong, of ministers from most of the city's churches, they marched on the Mayor's office, and begged to be put to work on the defenses of the city. They would not take up arms, but they were willing to dig trenches and throw up earthworks. Indeed, on their return home, they all stopped and bought themselves spades and haversacks.

This apparently had the desired effect, as the city did bestir itself; and, in any case, Lee was halted before reaching Philadelphia.

The news of the victory at Gettysburg was brought to the church during the Communion Service on Sunday, July 4, at 8:15 in the evening, and Phillips Brooks turned to the congregation and announced it. It must have been a dramatic moment.

We quote here short entries from his diary of the following week:

Monday, July 6, 1863 — Evening. Started for the battlefield under the auspices of the Sanitary Commission. Arrived at Baltimore about four o'clock the next morning.

Tuesday, July 7 — Spent all day making arrangements and trying to get off to Gettysburg. Started in freight train at 7 P.M., and spent the night in the cars, arriving at Hanover at seven o'clock the next morning.

Wednesday, July 8 — Almost all day at Hanover . . . Left for Gettysburg at 5 P.M. Arrived about seven. Cooper, Kent Stone (Rev. James Kent Stone, a son of the Rev. Dr. John S. Stone, who went to the battlefield in search of the body of his brother), and I slept in loft of tar shop.

Thursday, July 9 — A.M. at Sanitary Commission. Tent near depot. Then all over battlefield.

Friday, July 10 — All day at hospital of the Second Division of the Fifth Corps, distributing clothes and writing letters for the men. Very tired at night.

Saturday, July 11 — Walked with Cooper to the hospital of the Pennsylvania Reserves. P.M. among the rebel prisoners in the Third Corps Hospital. Terrible need and suffering.

Sunday, July 12 — All day among the rebel prisoners in the Third Corps Hospital.

Monday, July 13 — All day traveling to Philadelphia; arrived about 10:30 P.M.

His big heart knew no discrimination between suffering Confederates and Union men; he cared for all alike.

On Palm Sunday evening, April 9, 1865, he received word of Lee's surrender to Grant. But the joy of victory was speedily darkened when, on Saturday morning, it was followed by the appalling news of the President's assassination on Good Friday.

Abraham Lincoln was Phillips Brooks's ideal—*the great American*.

The church was draped in black, and services were held at the hour of Lincoln's funeral in Washington, twelve noon. As the funeral train reached Philadelphia the next Saturday, where the dead President was to lie in state in Independence Hall, Phillips Brooks and members of the Union League were there when the body was received. When the funeral train went on to New York, he was there, too, to look for the last time at the man who had been his hero.

The Rector and Vestry of Holy Trinity drew up a resolution, mourning the President's death, from which we select these phrases:

"It is not for an ordinary President that we now grieve, but for one who may fairly, for the great work he did, be placed next to the first

President of our Nation . . . He was eminently fitted to be the instrument of the Almighty Ruler of Nations; his character was one of those well-balanced ones in which individual traits never startle, but in which all harmonize. We mourn his death at the hands of those he labored to save and whom he longed to forgive . . .”

At the June 15, 1865, meeting of the Vestry, leave of absence was granted the Rector for twelve months, with his salary continued during his absence; and the Rector and Wardens were asked to make arrangements for supplying the pulpit while he was away. Eventually they selected for this purpose the Rev. Dr. Clement M. Butler and the Rev. Mr. Orrick.

Phillips Brooks's year abroad covered the British Isles, most of Europe, and finally the Holy Land, which last seems to have been a memorable experience for him. We cannot pass on without mentioning some notes in his diary about his stay in Nazareth:

“It was a strange feeling to ride down through it, and look in the people's faces and think how Christ must have been about these streets just like these children . . . We lunched at Cana of Galilee. You can picture Jesus and his mother going out from Nazareth to a near town to attend the marriage to which they had been invited.”

He spent two weeks in Jerusalem, and Lewis Redner, composer of the music for Phillips Brooks's famous carol “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” said of this visit: “I mailed him a copy of the book (the first Sunday School Chant and Tune Book) and he wrote me afterward that he walked around the walls of Jerusalem, singing from Miss Mulock's carol “God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen” to the tune I had composed.”

He was apparently especially interested in carols. Besides “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (the story of which we give

in the chapter on Trinity Music) he wrote a number of others; most familiar among them being, probably, "Everywhere, Everywhere, Christmas Tonight," which has been sung by Trinity Choirs on many Christmas Eves since then, and played on the bells.

To the deep regret—and over innumerable protests and pleas of the Vestry and congregation—he eventually took the momentous step of leaving Philadelphia to accept a call to Trinity Church in Boston, his home city.

That it must have been a struggle to leave The Church of The Holy Trinity where he had been very happy, is evidenced by these paragraphs in his letter of resignation addressed to the Vestry:

" . . . I need not say anything of the condition of the parish which I leave. It has been thoroughly active and prosperous from its start. My connection with it has not been clouded by a single discord. I have received from its members, and especially from you, the most uniform and lavish kindness. I look for a future for the parish even brighter than its past has been.

"I cannot help thanking you, my dear friends, for all your kindness and consideration and cordial co-operation, ever since we have been together. No minister ever had a better or more helpful Vestry, and while I pray for God's blessing upon a parish which must always be very near my heart, I beseech of Him also to send to each of you His best gifts of personal prosperity and happiness.

"With the most sincere affection,

I am your friend,
PHILLIPS BROOKS."

His fame and the number of his admirers continued to grow in Boston as they had done in Philadelphia, and after twenty-two full and inspired years he was elevated to the Episcopate as Bishop of Massachusetts.

This last part of his life does not belong in a history of The Church of The Holy Trinity, except for one link which we feel deserves mention.

It was told to us by a very lovely old lady, a former member of Holy Trinity, Mrs. Thomas D. Reath, who said that she and her brother, W. Dewees Roberts, had been baptized by Phillips Brooks. She went on to explain that her brother had been influenced by Phillips Brooks to enter the ministry, and had studied at Harvard Divinity School. Upon his graduation, Dr. Brooks had invited him to become his assistant minister at Trinity Church in Boston.

When his few short years as Bishop were ended by a throat infection after only four days' illness, Dewees Roberts, with other friends, helped care for him. It is a touching thought that the little baby he baptized in The Church of The Holy Trinity in Philadelphia should have grown up to work with Phillips Brooks, and finally to be beside him at the close of his life.

We cannot turn the last page of this chapter without repeating the beautiful incident related by his private secretary, the Rev. William Henry Brooks, D. D., who stood by his bed at the end.

Shortly after midnight, on the night he died, Phillips Brooks looked up at those around him, and making a little gesture with his hand, as if waving, said distinctly, "Good-bye: I am going home. I will see you in the morning."

A more radiant morning than any this world knows.

1870 - 1898

A TIME OF GROWTH

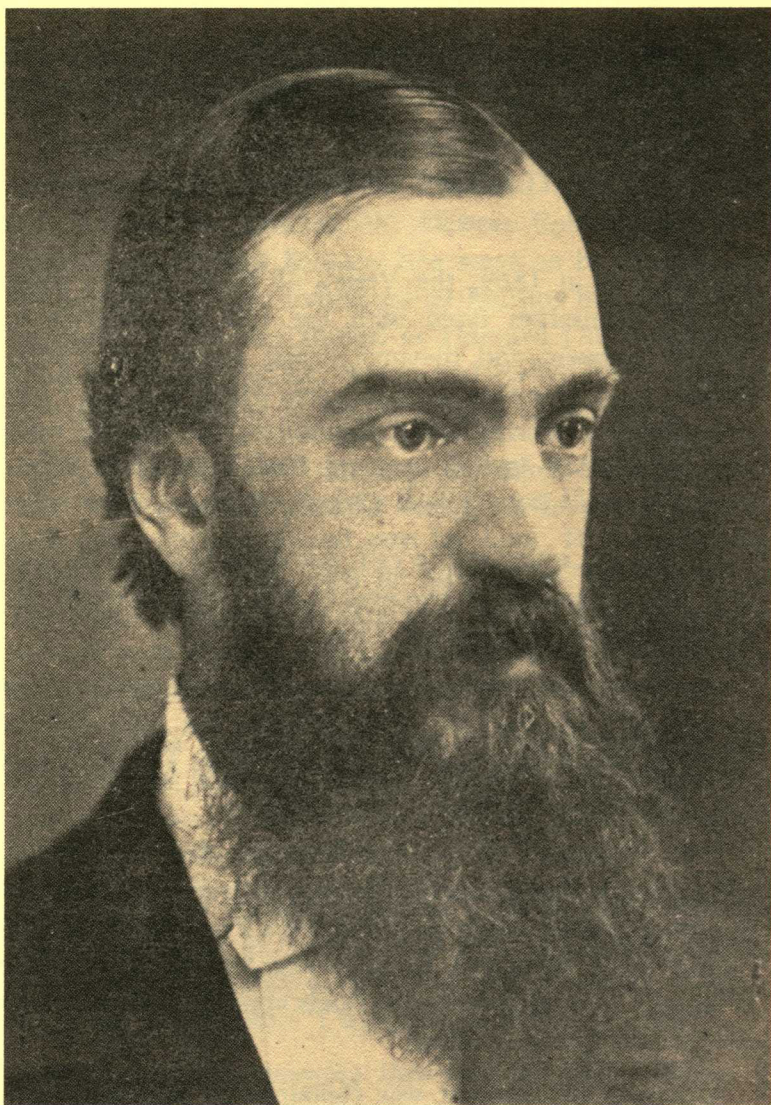
WHEN, in 1869, the Vestry of Holy Trinity found themselves faced with the task of replacing an eloquent and dynamic young rector like Phillips Brooks, for a time they were at a loss where to turn. However, after considering many possibilities, and hearing many sermons, their choice fell upon the Rev. Thomas A. Jaggar, D. D., Rector of St. John's Church, Yonkers, New York.

Dr. Jaggar accepted the call, but unfortunately his ministry was terminated at the end of five years when he was elected Bishop of Southern Ohio.

One important happening during his time stands out in the church's history. In 1873, through the gifts of Mrs. Wilstach, Mr. Coffin, and Mr. Bohlen, Holy Trinity Chapel was enabled to expand.

Mrs. Wilstach's will, which bore the date of July 31, 1873, directed her executors "to appropriate to the purchase of a lot of ground and to build thereon a Protestant Episcopal Church as a Memorial to my daughter, Anna Gertrude Wilstach . . . as elegant as the funds appropriated will, with careful management, allow."

Although this bequest was contained in her will, Mrs. Wilstach was anxious to see the church completed during her lifetime, and in June of 1874, gave \$50,000 so the work could be begun at once. A year later, on All Saints' Day,



The Rev. Thomas A. Jaggar, D.D., third Rector of Holy Trinity, who resigned from his duties there after five years, to accept his election as Bishop of Southern Ohio.

she had the happy privilege of witnessing the consecration of the present building at Twenty-second and Spruce Streets.

The chapel itself is a memorial to Miss Gertrude Wilstach, while the funds for the Sunday school building adjoining it were given in memory of John Bohlen by his sister and a close friend.

Today, in this Centennial year, the chapel has become Trinity Memorial Church, an independent parish though still closely associated with the mother church. As one vestryman remarked, "It's not a divorce; only a legal separation."

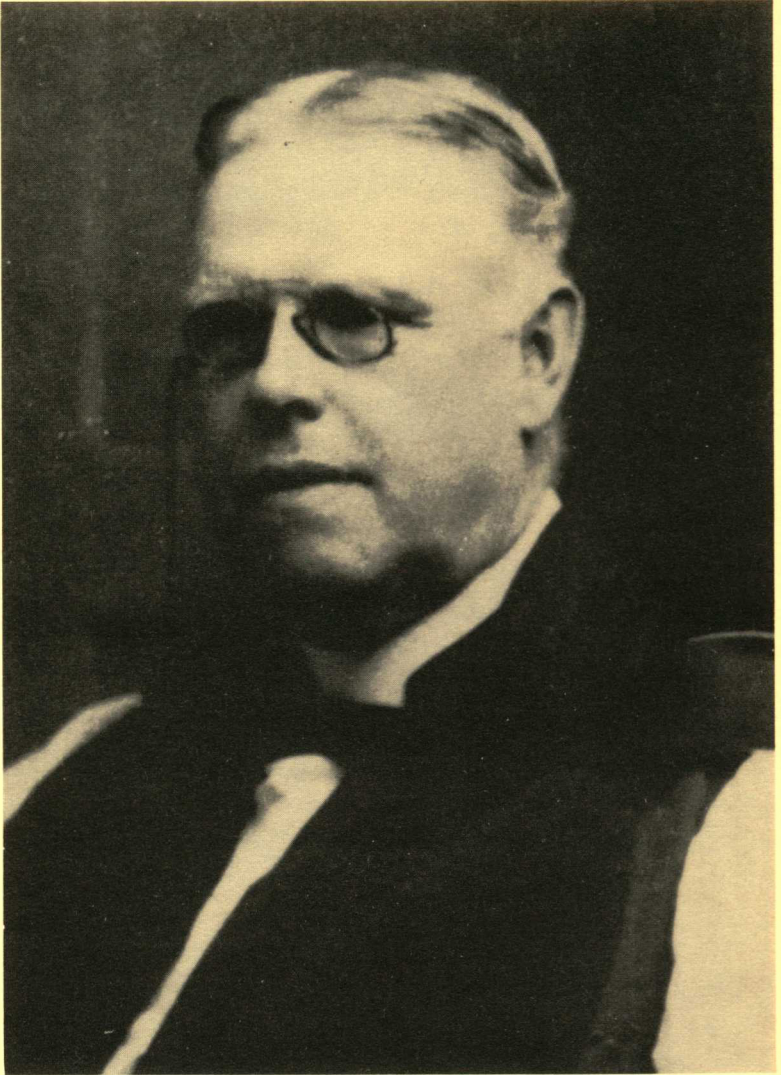
It was Phillips Brooks, their beloved young second Rector, who urged on the Vestry a warm friend of his for their next minister—the Rev. William Neilson McVickar, D. D.; and at a special meeting on May 20, 1875, he was duly elected.

Much new growth in the church was to take place during the twenty-two years of Dr. McVickar's ministry.

The new Holy Trinity Chapel buildings, which as we have seen were begun during Dr. Jaggar's rectorship, were completed after Dr. McVickar came to the church.

Also in his time, a small mission was started in a rented room at the southeast corner of Twenty-third and Tasker Streets, in 1893, and called then the Chapel of Saint Faith. This was later to become the second chapel of Holy Trinity Parish, under the name of The Prince of Peace.

Looking ahead to the rectorship of Dr. Floyd Tomkins, we see that this small mission, in a new, larger building



The Right Rev. William Neilson McVickar, D.D., fourth Rector of The Church of The Holy Trinity, whose ministry of twenty-two years made him much beloved in the Parish. He left Philadelphia to become Bishop of Rhode Island in 1898.

on Morris Street, was consecrated on December 29, 1907, by *Bishop* McVickar, who returned from his Rhode Island Diocese to perform the ceremony.

In Dr. McVickar's ministry, too, was established the John Bohlen Lectureship. By a deed of trust, executed on June 2, 1875, the trustees under the will of Mr. Bohlen transferred to "the Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of The Church of The Holy Trinity, Philadelphia" in trust, a fund for certain designated purposes, out of which a sum was set aside for the endowment of a yearly series of lectures. It is interesting to note that the earliest of these lectures—four in number—were delivered in 1877 by the first Rector of the church, Dr. Alexander H. Vinton; and that in 1879 Phillips Brooks was the lecturer, his theme being "The Influence of Jesus."

On Thursday morning, April 22, twenty-two years after the laying of the cornerstone, The Church of The Holy Trinity was consecrated—all debts, and the mortgage having been then satisfied.

We find in the Vestry Minutes for May 2, this description of the ceremony:

"The bishops in their robes, and the clergy in surplices, assembled in large numbers in the parish building at 11 o'clock, and preceded by the Church Wardens and Vestrymen, and members of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, walked in procession down the yard to the front of the church, and proceeded through the main door, up the middle aisle, to the chancel. As soon as the clergy and laymen were all seated in the places reserved for them, the Accounting Warden approached the chancel and read the certificate, declaring there was 'no mortgage, lien, debt, or incumbrance of any sort on the building, and that this church is to be forever held and used for the sole purpose of worshiping Almighty God, in accordance with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America.'

"The certificate was signed by the Rector, Wardens, and all the Vestrymen, and the Right Rev. William Bacon Stevens, Bishop of the Diocese, read the sentences of consecration.

"The services were participated in by the Bishop of Pennsylvania and the Bishop of Central Pennsylvania, assisted by the Rev. Phillips Brooks, D. D., the Rev. Dr. Morton, the Rev. Dr. Goodwin, the Rev. Dr. Butler, the Rev. Dr. Buchanan, and the Rector of the church.

"The sermon was preached by the Rev. Alexander Hamilton Vinton, D. D., first Rector of the church, and the offering was given to the New American Church Building Fund Commission.

"The whole service was deeply interesting. The chancel was beautifully decorated with growing flowers; and the music by our large and well-trained choir, under the direction of Mr. Cross the organist, was very excellent."

Unfortunately a sad event followed closely upon this happy occasion, when on Saturday morning, Dr. Vinton was taken seriously ill at the home of Mr. Lemuel Coffin, where he had been staying. His children and near relatives were hurriedly summoned to his bedside; but on the third day after his attack he became unconscious, and the end followed swiftly.

At his funeral, the Rev. Robert C. Winthrop, the Hon. John Welsh, and Mr. William H. Ashurst, together with the Wardens and Vestrymen of the church, acted as pall bearers. The opening sentences of the service were read by Bishop Stevens, the lessons and prayers by Phillips Brooks and the Rector of the parish, and the benediction pronounced by Bishop Lee of Delaware.

The month of October, 1883, looms importantly in any history of The Church of The Holy Trinity, for it was on October 3 that the chimes—given by Mr. Joseph E. Temple as a memorial to his wife—were first played for the opening

session of the General Convention of the Church, which met that year in Holy Trinity.

Regretfully, we can only touch here on even such important events, since it is obvious that a hundred years of history cannot be fitted into the pages of one small book without serious compression.

We pass over, then, the next nine busy, fruitful years in the parish life, and pause at a note in the Vestry Minutes in the fall of 1892, which states that the new parish house on Twentieth Street had just been opened. Two years later, the rectory (now our parish house at 1904 Walnut Street) was first occupied by Dr. McVickar.

And here, despite space limitations, it seems fitting to describe the Rector who was so much beloved in the parish for so many years.

He was a large man—both in height and girth; with a gentle, outgoing personality, a quick sense of humor, and a great love for little children. His sister kept house for him in the rectory, and the two shared this love of children, so that few weeks passed without Miss McVickar gathering a group of youngsters in the rectory “parlor” for a party—a party at which the star performer was invariably a big, clumsy, laughable bear, played by the Rector, to the huge delight of his small guests.

It seemed quite natural to Dr. McVickar, therefore, when one afternoon, entering the rectory, he heard laughter and excited voices.

It speaks for the simple unself-consciousness of the man that he saw nothing undignified in once more surprising his young friends with their favorite game; and dropping to

his knees crept on all fours between the heavy velvet portieres at the doorway, uttering playful growls of warning.

Instead of the delighted shrieks he expected, a breathless silence ensued; and raising his head, the startled Rector found himself facing a group of ladies of the parish drinking tea . . .

Another expansion of parish activities, Holiday House, still a favorite vacation spot for the young people of the church, was first opened at Sellersville, Pennsylvania, on June 19, 1895, especially for mothers and young children. This, too, was of Dr. McVickar's sponsoring.

Many in the congregation may not realize that the first plan for setting up an endowment fund for Holy Trinity was Lemuel Coffin's—the man who had been so active in the early beginnings of the church.

The Vestry Minutes for April 5, 1897, carry this Resolution:

Whereas, It is desirable that steps should be taken to provide an endowment fund for this parish, and Whereas The pious intention of our late colleague, Lemuel Coffin, expressed in his last will and testament, to give \$50,000 for this purpose, has been frustrated by the losses sustained by his estate since his death, therefore

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to issue an appeal for contributions to a fund of \$50,000 to be called the Lemuel Coffin Fund, and to be held by the Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of the Holy Trinity in trust for its endowment. The principal to be securely invested and the interest thereon to be allowed to accumulate until, whether in this way or by additional contributions, the endowment fund shall amount to \$100,000, when the income may be used, and shall be applied to parish expenses.

This, then, was the earliest beginning of the present endowment fund, later to be substantially built up under Dr. Tomkins' wise leadership.

In November of that same year, Dr. McVickar surprised and deeply grieved his people by announcing that he had accepted his election to the Episcopate of Rhode Island. He was the third bishop Holy Trinity had now given to the Church. (There was later to be a fourth—the Right Rev. William P. Remington, D. D., Bishop of Oregon, who had been an assistant minister under Dr. Tomkins from 1905-1907.)

The Vestry passed a resolution, expressing their views on the election of Dr. McVickar as Coadjutor Bishop of Rhode Island:

. . . we desire to assure you of the sincere love which we and the entire congregation of Holy Trinity have had for you during all the years of your ministry among us.

For twenty-two years you have shared in our joys and sympathized with us in our sorrows, and have not only been our faithful friend and rector, but our zealous leader and our inspiration in every good work . . . Under your faithful ministry the growth of Holy Trinity Parish has been very remarkable.

Dr. McVickar's consecration as Bishop took place in Holy Trinity, on the morning of January 27, 1898.

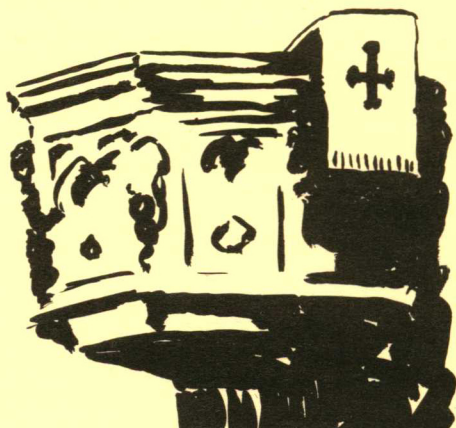
It must have been an inspiring and colorful ceremony, for ten bishops and more than three hundred clergymen in their vestments marched in the procession, headed by the Vestry, the Standing Committee of Pennsylvania, and members of the Standing Committee of Rhode Island.

There was a choir in the chancel, a larger choir in the rear gallery, and both the chancel and gallery organs played the processional hymn, sung by over a thousand voices.

The consecrators were Bishops Doane of Albany, Jaggard of Southern Ohio (formerly the third Rector of the church),

and Potter of New York. The commission to consecrate was read by Bishop Satterlee of Washington, and Bishop Doane then began the Communion Service. Bishop Coleman of Delaware read the Epistle; Bishop Scarborough of New Jersey the Gospel; while the sermon was preached by Bishop Randolph of Southern Virginia, from the text (Romans 1:1): "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ."

The three consecrators, together with Bishops Whittaker, Lawrence, and Randolph, laid their hands on the newly elected Bishop's head, and the choirs sang "Go forward, Christian soldier."



The *Convocation Register of Rhode Island*, from which we take this account, concluded by saying, "Immediately after the service the clergy and standing committees were hospitably entertained at the Aldine Hotel, when they had an opportunity to meet the new Bishop."

1899 - 1932

DR. TOMKINS' THIRTY-THREE YEARS

THE ministry of the fifth Rector of Holy Trinity, Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins, was the longest in its history, and to those of the congregation who were privileged to know him, his memory is still fresh and shining and beloved.

At a special meeting of the Vestry held in the Parish House on January 23, 1899, ballots were cast for a new rector, and the teller announced that the Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, D.D., of Grace Church, Providence, Rhode Island, had been unanimously elected. We quote here from his letter of acceptance:

"I shall come to you with one single desire to be your minister. 'Christ crucified for us' will be my theme, and, I trust, our mutual inspiration . . . May I not hope that your hands and hearts will be ready to join mine in simple, devoted effort . . . to make the church in very deed God's House, open to all His children, with a message to all, and a blessing to all?"

From the beginning of his ministry, he seems to have had an intuitive understanding of the needs and desires of his new congregation, as is evidenced by several of his earliest announcements of policy.

"The customary services of the church," he told them, "will remain the same. They are very dear to us all. But to reach many who do not come to these, a Sunday night service has been begun. It is a peculiarly bright, musical



The Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, D.D., fifth Rector of the church. After his death, these notes were found in his desk: Here I am, Lord. Use me as Thou wilt. And in my service, as in my loving loyalty and my quiet hours, may I find Thee near and enter more deeply into the riches of Thy peace. Amen.

service, preceded by an organ recital—for the organ is pre-eminently God's instrument, and meant to help devotion."

He soon added still other services—Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, even though, as sometimes happened, there might be no congregation present.

When this fact was pointed out to him, he was not disturbed. "The Daily Prayers for which our dear Prayer Book stands," he insisted, "are bound to be a blessing. Many cannot come, or come regularly. But at 9 A.M. and at 5 P.M. they can remember that this worship is being rendered to God, and can lift up their hearts for a moment in prayer."

He had faith in untold spiritual good to come as a result of this daily supplication.

Usually he had students from the Philadelphia Divinity School read these Morning and Evening Prayers, believing it valuable experience for them. He felt that one of his most sacred duties was to encourage young men to study for the ministry, and his wholehearted interest and friendship followed them through the seminary.

Upon their graduation, he often asked them to help him at his evening services. Dr. Henry Paynter, Editor of *The Church News*, gives us an interesting little reminiscence about this.

While he himself was studying in the Philadelphia Divinity School, Dr. Tomkins often had him come down to read the weekday prayers, and upon his graduation invited him to assist one Sunday at the evening service.

When the night came, and Henry Paynter arrived at the church, he was greeted by the news that Dr. Tomkins, who

was in Washington, had missed his train, but had sent word that his young guest was to take the service for him, and preach in his place.

"Of course I had stage fright at first," Dr. Paynter confessed. "The largest congregation I had preached to before was in a small mission church in the West, where fifty people meant a large turnout. Those Sunday evenings at Holy Trinity in Dr. Tomkins' time saw the great church crowded, including the galleries."

We asked him, appalled, "And you hadn't a sermon prepared, had you?"

He agreed that he hadn't, but that he had plunged nervously into the kind of sermon his mission congregations had liked; and, miraculously, the twelve hundred or more people listening that night in Holy Trinity had liked it, too. He says he was able to get through it largely because Dr. Tomkins had believed he could.

The fifth Rector of Holy Trinity knew his young men, it appears, better than they knew themselves.

He was intensely practical as well as spiritual, for he was able to look ahead to the future inevitable movement of families away from the city, when Holy Trinity would become a "downtown" church, with a consequent grave diminishing of congregation and income. He constantly urged the creating of a substantial endowment fund to meet that situation.

This need had also been envisioned, as we have seen, in Dr. McVickar's time by Lemuel Coffin, the first Accounting Warden of the church, who had left a provision in his will

to start such a fund. Many people in the congregation today remember Dr. Tomkins' appeal at certain services for the endowment fund, and the amazing response that filled the collection plates to overflowing. By 1914, the fund had reached \$100,000, and was still growing; until today it has passed the \$1,000,000 mark.

The new building of the second chapel of the parish, the Prince of Peace—formerly Saint Faith's Mission—was opened to its congregation on March 20, 1907. But even after that forward step, the parish continued its expansion, and a third chapel was added seven years afterward, which had its earliest beginnings in the Sunday School for Colored People founded by Phillips Brooks in 1867.

A long-time member of the congregation and an earnest church worker, Mr. Lino F. Rondinella, had become interested in this Sunday school as early as 1883, and had filled successively many executive and teaching offices in it, until in 1892 he was made superintendent. In that year the school held its sessions in the new Parish House of Holy Trinity Church at 217 South Twentieth Street. The attendance had now grown to 268 pupils, and this number was to increase steadily until in 1910 the colored school was to have on its rolls more than 475 pupils and 38 teachers.

During all these years, Mr. Rondinella had been constantly urging on the Vestry the need for a colored chapel in the parish, and in June of 1914 his hopes became reality, with the opening of the Phillips Brooks Memorial Chapel. This was located on Lombard, between Nineteenth and Twentieth Streets, and the assistant minister of Holy Trinity directed its work until a permanent minister took charge two years later.

It is interesting to know that the furniture for the chapel was paid for out of gifts by the colored Sunday school, where for a number of years Mr. Rondinella had set aside the offerings on the first Sunday in each month, looking ahead to the day when the chapel should be started.

However, we must turn back here, as we have jumped seven years ahead in our history, and missed recording the important Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration, which took place in May of 1907.

On that day services were held in the church to commemorate the laying of the cornerstone in 1857, and a reception was held in the Parish House for both old and new parishioners. Two bishops, who had been, respectively, third and fourth rectors of The Church of The Holy Trinity, Bishops Jaggar and McVickar, both returned to make addresses at the Anniversary service.

The devoted, long-continuing, and unselfish service of that early congregation to the work of their church seems convincingly exemplified by an entry in the Minutes of the Vestry for March 3, 1913 which quotes Dr. Tomkins' own words:

"It is an interesting and suggestive fact that this church has had from its foundation in 1858, only two accounting wardens: Mr. Lemuel Coffin, who served from 1858 to 1895, and Mr. Theodore H. Morris, who served from 1895 until his death this year. Of Mr. Morris' noble and valuable services in the parish we cannot readily speak. His work was so constant, so loving, so personal in all the details of the church life, that no pen can record it . . ."

If we could mention all those men and women who gave faithfully of their time, service, and money, this history would, we fear, grow into one of those old three-volume

works our ancestors enjoyed. We can, at best, mention only a few instances where the work included an unusually large number of people, such as Miss Mary D. Schott's Missionary Bible Class, which had a membership at one time of over two hundred women. In Miss Schott's will she left \$10,000 to "the church I have loved so truly, and in which I have worked so many years." She might be speaking for hundreds of other equally devoted church members.

Another organization not to be overlooked was Mr. Anthony J. Drexel Biddle's Bible Class for men, which is spoken of in his daughter's recent popular book, *My Philadelphia Father*. Dr. Tomkins had asked Mr. Biddle to take a very small class and see what he could do with it. The results were certainly amazing, as he promptly built it up to a nation-wide group of classes, and not only taught them the Bible, but took them into the country for week-ends of what his daughter calls "sports, prayer, and picnics."

They adored him, of course, and found the combination of religion and healthy outdoor exercise beneficial to their bodies as well as to their souls. When Mr. Biddle decided he had a concert voice, actually hiring the Academy of Music to give his recital in, and the tickets were not bought up as enthusiastically as he had expected, his loyal Bible classes came to hear him and occupied the empty seats.

In 1917, Mrs. Phebe Ashbridge, another loyal member of the church, left a large sum in her will to the endowment fund, as well as her family silver and jewelry.

The Vestry decided to have the silver melted down and made into individual Communion sets to be given to small mission churches as a memorial to her; and on January 2,



Looking toward the main entrance, from the chancel steps, and showing the pipes of the gallery organ, against the rose window.

1919, the Minutes state that "J. E. Caldwell informed us that they can make eight Communion sets out of the silver in their hands."

These sets were accordingly made; five of them being sent to missions in our Western states, one to our own Phillips Brooks Chapel, one to the Bishop of Liberia for a small African mission, and the eighth to a little church on an Indian Reservation in Nevada. The spirit of fellowship at Holy Trinity has always reached out to touch missions in all parts of the world. There is even a church in Kyoto, Japan, named The Church of The Holy Trinity for us, built with the money sent by our parish.

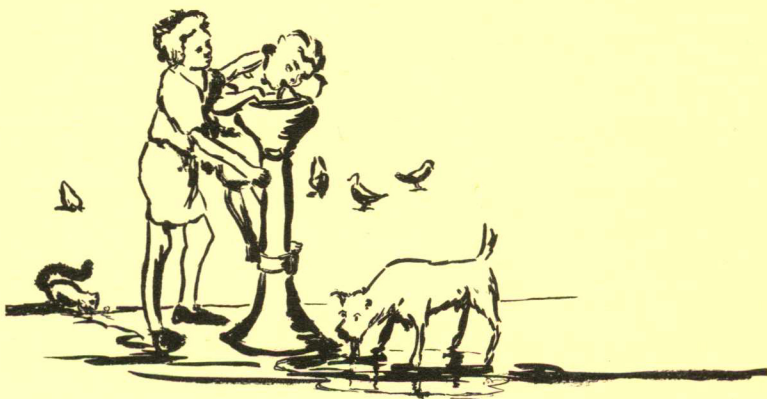
In 1918, when the effects of World War I caused an acute fuel shortage in the country, three churches, St. Mark's, St. James's and Holy Trinity combined their weekday services to save coal; probably the first time a group of large Episcopal churches in Philadelphia had held united services.

Two years later we see another "first" in the church: the establishment of the envelope system for Sunday offerings. Apparently there was some opposition to the plan, for in 1920 the Accounting Warden notes that "notwithstanding much prejudice against the new system, it has saved us from a very large deficit, which in the unusual conditions of the year would otherwise have occurred. In 1919 our contributions for parish work were \$4,241; in 1920, principally through the envelope system, they amounted to \$10,000; and the church collections outside the envelopes were not diminished. The following year the envelopes brought in about \$23,000, an increase of \$11,000 over 1919."

In the early days of radio, Dr. Tomkins was once more farsighted enough to see the advantages in broadcasting

the Sunday morning service directly from the church. It was first tried out in the Memorial Chapel, and in 1923 was transferred to the mother church. All down the years since then, this has proved a great blessing to thousands of shut-ins and old people who would otherwise never be able to take part in a church service. Letters telling what it has meant to them are received daily, and about \$5,000 a year comes in from this grateful radio congregation to help pay for the broadcasting.

In commemoration of Dr. Tomkins' twenty-five years of rectorship, the Guild decided to erect the ever-useful ice-



water fountain on Rittenhouse Square facing the church, replacing the unsightly iron hydrant which had been maintained for thirty-five years by various members of the parish.

Today one hardly ever passes the fountain without seeing children and their elders drinking from it. Even thirsty dogs and small gray squirrels lap up the refreshing water from the lower basin planned for their accommodation; and

it is an everyday sight to observe a trolley car or delivery truck stopping to allow its driver to quench a summer day's thirst. The committee sponsoring the fountain was composed of Mrs. John Townsend, Miss Ellen Morris, Miss Edith Rondinella, and Mrs. B. J. Ruderow.

On March 26, 1924, a special Vestry meeting was called to discuss the proposal of a Cathedral Chapter taking over all the buildings, trust funds, and other assets, and turning The Church of The Holy Trinity into The Cathedral Church of The Diocese of Pennsylvania. It seems to have been considered seriously and at length, but the final judgment of the Vestry was that no action could be taken at that time; and in reading through the Minutes it does not appear to have come up again.

Important as a cathedral undoubtedly is, we fear we would have sadly missed our familiar Church of The Holy Trinity.

Not only the parish, but the whole city, where he was so loved for his social and civic work, were shocked and deeply grieved by Dr. Tomkins' death during Holy Week of 1932. He had been stricken with broncho-pneumonia, following a sinus infection for which he was being treated in Jefferson Hospital. He was eighty-two years old, and had served over half a century in the priesthood, thirty-three years of this time having been spent as Rector of The Church of The Holy Trinity.

An article in the *Public Ledger* of that week says of him: "He was one of the foremost clergymen of his church, a successful administrator and voluminous writer on religious topics. Under his rectorship of Holy Trinity the parish grew to its present leading position among the city churches,

its endowment was increased tenfold, and three outlying chapels were organized and put under his care . . . The commanding position he occupied in the diocese will not be easy to fill."

On the Sunday after Ascension, May 8, a memorial service was held for him in Holy Trinity, for which the bishop who had years before been his assistant minister, the Right Rev. William P. Remington, D.D., returned to Philadelphia from his Oregon See to preach the sermon.

At the close of his address, Bishop Remington read the lovely sonnet "Vestments" by Charles Bancroft, a long-time member of the church:

"He had known something of the winds that sweep
Across the prairies and must shape a man,
For consecration, when the faith is deep
And one accepts the wisdom of God's plan.
He looked above and over and beyond
The things that most men gloat upon while here.
His love stretched out to touch a heart life wronged
And left it peace and hope and joy and cheer.
His was the shaping of a Christian life,
Gaged by commandments struck upon the stone;
He had the strength to conquer in the strife
And claim a life eternal for his own.
He did not question why or reason ask,
But gave himself completely to his task."

1932 - 1957

THE CHANGING ERA

FOR a year after Dr. Tomkins' death the church was without a rector. Fortunately the Rev. Howard Chandler Robbins, former Dean of The Cathedral of St. John The Divine, was prevailed upon to conduct the services and preach during the following winter, until a new rector should have been secured.

In the year-long search for Dr. Tomkins' successor, two members of the Vestry, William H. DuBarry and C. C. Morris, heard the young Rector of St. Paul's Church in New Haven, Connecticut, preach, and felt that here was the man fitted to step into the vacant pulpit of Holy Trinity.

The name of the Rev. Howard Robert Weir was accordingly placed in nomination on June 10, his official connection with the parish to start on the first of August.

Unfortunately, his ministry was to be of only a few years duration. Like two of his predecessors—Dr. Vinton and Dr. Jaggar—he served the church for about four years. As we have seen, Dr. Vinton went from us to a New York City church, and Dr. Jaggar to the Episcopate of Southern Ohio. Mr. Weir's rectorship was terminated by his death in a New Haven hospital, following an operation.

But a number of his parishioners have told us of the friendly social life he and his wife had begun to build up



The Rev. Howard Robert Weir, our sixth Rector, whose ministry was, unhappily, cut short after only four years.

in the rectory, where they loved to gather groups among the congregation for afternoon tea and special evening activities.

He was intensely interested in the youth of the parish, and had many plans for increasing the young people's associations in the church, and for making fuller use of the recreational facilities of Holiday House, at Sellersville.

His dramatic presentation of the needs of people in our own land, as well as in foreign fields, had already led to an increase in certain missionary activities during his ministry; he had become a leader, too, in the work of the United Thank Offering of the diocese.

A memorial service was held for him on Sunday, October 3, 1937. Bishop Dalton of New Hampshire was invited to preach the sermon, and Mrs. Weir selected the hymns and music her husband had particularly loved.

After the security of Dr. Tomkins' long rectorship, the parish was upset and bewildered by being suddenly without leadership, and again the Vestry had to start on another year-long pilgrimage. One of them calculated that, collectively, they covered twenty thousand miles in this quest.

They even traveled across the border into Canada, and there found the man who was later to win such heartfelt love from his congregation, the Rev. E. Frank Salmon, D.D., at that time Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, in Ottawa.

At a special meeting of the Vestry on April 27, 1938, Mr. Carl Martin nominated Dr. Salmon for Rector, and the motion was seconded by Mr. William DuBarry. The



The Rev. E. Frank Salmon, D.D., formerly Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa, Canada, who was our seventh Rector for twelve years of helpful ministry.

voting was unanimous, and on April 30, a letter of acceptance was received from the Rector-elect.

Dr. Salmon is an elequent preacher, and he is the possessor of a warm and kindly humor. He was to be the beloved minister at Holy Trinity for twelve years.

He came, however, at a time when Dr. Tomkins' earlier predictions of a changing era in both city and parish were beginning to be fulfilled.

Most of the old families around Rittenhouse Square had by then moved into the suburbs; and though many of them still returned to worship in their former church, a large majority, of necessity, could not do so, and in consequence the congregation had greatly diminished. Especially was this change felt in the loss of those families whose small sons and daughters had made up the Sunday school rolls, for now in their stead, people moving into the area were mostly young business folk without children.

The Sunday school suffered a gradual but inevitable decline, and for the time being, there seemed no way in which this condition could be combated.

Still another change was coming into the church, in common with other parishes of the day: a move toward a more ornate service and more ornate places of worship. Even the Protestant sects were heading in this direction.

Up to now there had been a Communion table in Holy Trinity, but no actual altar; there had been no altar cross, no candles, no flower vases, no processional cross.

On January 5, 1939, a special meeting of the Vestry was held to consider the acceptance of a gift of a memorial cross



O God, whom year by year we praise for the dedication of this church; Hear, we beseech thee, the prayers of thy people, and grant that whosoever shall worship before thee in this place, may obtain thy merciful aid and protection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Book of Common Prayer*

and two flower vases to be placed in the chancel. It was an innovation to be pondered carefully.

The Rector stated that he was very much in favor of it, and gave good reasons for his stand. Mr. Martin then moved that the gifts be accepted, and Mr. DuBarry seconded the motion. But this was followed by an amendment that the gift of the cross be delayed until such time as the Rector felt it would be in the best interests of the parish to place it on the altar.

While this trend toward a more elaborate worship was in keeping with similar movements in other churches, it can well be understood that it was the occasion of much searching of heart for those who had, for many generations, been accustomed to the old traditions. To many of the older families such changes meant a real break with the past, and were not easy.

However, two months later, in March, we find that the cross and flower vases were in place, as well as a dossal curtain behind the altar, and it was generally agreed that they added greatly to the appearance of the chancel. Not long afterward, the latter was still further adorned by the beautiful murals given by Mrs. John Kennedy, a member of the congregation, which were dedicated on September 27, 1942.

The central panel is a picture of the Nativity; the panel on the Gospel side depicts the shepherds scene from St. Luke's Gospel, and that on the Epistle side the Magi bearing their offerings to the Christ Child, as related in St. Matthew. The murals are the work of the well-known artist, Hildreth Meiere of New York, whose paintings appear in

churches in every part of the land—in St. Paul's, New Haven, in St. Thomas', New York City, and in St. Michael's Monastery, Union City, New Jersey, to mention just a few.

Most of the people who will read this little book were in the congregation during Dr. Salmon's ministry, and are now in that of our present Rector, Dr. Longley. They already know most of what could be told here. It is difficult to write history while we are in the process of living it.

But one touching little story comes to mind that happened during the grim days of World War II, and deals with what certain members of The Church of The Holy Trinity did for lonely, homesick servicemen in Philadelphia.

It was on Easter Sunday morning, early in the war. Mr. Fred Werner, seventy-five years old, with white hair and a smile as warm as his heart, stood on the church steps just before the service. He happened to see two sailors sitting on one of the benches in Rittenhouse Square, across from the church, and on an impulse went over to invite them to come with him to the service.

The boys accepted, and that was the beginning of it all. Because the sailors seemed to enjoy both his companionship and the music and preaching, Mr. Werner decided there were probably many other lonely young servicemen to whom a Sunday in Holy Trinity would appeal, too.

He began coming to town early from his Drexel Hill home, and rounding up soldiers, sailors, and marines, with a cordial "Why don't you come along to church with me?"

And come along they did. Interested spectators, who watched the little parade approach Walnut and Nineteenth

Streets, said he often had twenty to forty men following him. Occasionally a WAC, WAVE, or "Lady Marine" joined the group, and came to pray and listen with the others.

Later, Mr. Werner took them all sight-seeing. He showed them Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, Betsy Ross House, and many other points of historical interest in the city. Usually he took them to lunch, too, even if it could only be sandwiches, coffee, and ice cream. To defray the expense of these outings, various members of the parish offered contributions, thus acting as vicarious hosts. Often French sailors whose ships were in our port, were included. The invitations had, of necessity, to be in pantomime, but were evidently understood, for the red pompons on the sailors' hats were seen bobbing along in the churchgoing procession on many Sunday mornings to the great interest of all who saw them.

These outings began a real Philadelphia tradition, and Mr. Werner continued his work of love and good will even after the war ended, as long as he was able to march sturdily at the head of his queue of guests. It is interesting to speculate on how many parts of the U.S.A.—and of France, as well—still speak of Philadelphia, and of The Church of The Holy Trinity in particular, as familiar and well-loved names.

In 1947, the rectory at 1904 Walnut Street again became the Parish House, and an apartment was rented for Dr. Salmon and his family at the Rittenhouse Plaza across from the church. Shortly before this, the Parish House on Twentieth Street had been sold for a school, making these changes expedient.

As a matter of record, 1904 Walnut Street had been the original Parish House, having been completed four months before the church itself, and was used to hold services in during that period. When Dr. McVickar was Rector, it was made the rectory, and the parish offices were moved to the new building on Twentieth Street. Now the pattern had reversed itself, and our Parish House today is located again where it was in the first years.

From the earliest days of Holy Trinity, there had been no free pews in the church, except in the galleries. All others were privately owned, or, in some cases, rented. Consequently it was natural that only those eligible to vote in the election of Vestrymen, or to have a voice in other church matters that might come up, were necessarily pew owners.

Down through the years the number of these pew owners had dwindled, for in many cases, when families had moved away from the city they had returned ownership of their pews to the church by deed of gift; and in other cases had left them to the church in their wills. Now, in Dr. Salmon's time, the pew owners were no longer a majority, and as a result of much deliberation by the Wardens, Vestry, and Rector, an amendment as of March 21, 1951, was made in the Bylaws of the Charter of The Church of The Holy Trinity. By this change, members of the congregation were permitted to vote if they were lay, over twenty-one years of age, confirmed members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, had been worshipers in Holy Trinity for at least three years previously, and appeared on the books of the Corporation as having been contributors of record during that time—in other words, members in good standing in the church.

This amendment to the Bylaws of the Charter was the final important event in Dr. Salmon's twelve full and active years as Rector, and the Sunday he announced it he also broke to the congregation the news of his impending resignation, because of ill health and upon the order of his physicians.

The news of his retirement came as a blow to the people sitting there in the pews, listening; and here—despite all conventions regarding the editorial “We”—your historian cannot refrain from breaking, for two short paragraphs, into personal narrative:

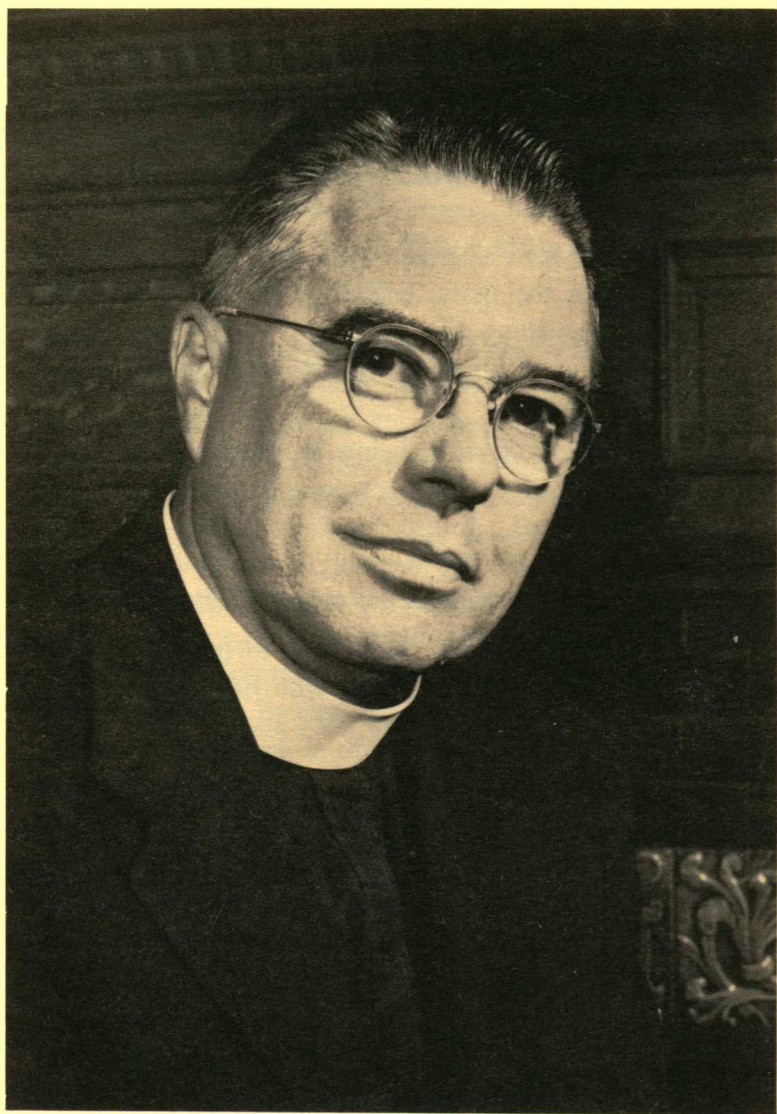
I remember so vividly being in the congregation that morning. Some of us were crying a little, very quietly, as Dr. Salmon talked. I also remember—and it seems the perfect way to close this account of his time among us—his saying, standing there in the pulpit, looking down on us:

“Your next Rector will be a very fortunate man. Who should know that better than I, who have worked among you for twelve years? *You are good people . . .*”

So once more Holy Trinity was left without a rector for a year, during which time there were many guest preachers, and the Rev. T. Gordon Ott, assistant minister, remained in charge.

Then, on September 9, 1951, the eighth Rector of Holy Trinity, the Rev. Harry S. Longley, D.D., came to us from St. John's Church in Charleston, West Virginia. At the same time, and from the same church, the Rev. Edward Pollanick became our Associate Rector.

Mr. Pollanick's work was to be mainly among young people—gathering together from among the new great



The Rev. Harry S. Longley, D.D., eighth Rector of The Church of The Holy Trinity, whose friendly and dynamic personality has already endeared him to his people.

apartment houses that had been built around Rittenhouse Square, groups of young men and women who were to form the Young Adults of the Trinity Club and the student group to be known as the Canterbury Club.

In meeting the new families who had moved into the neighborhood, Dr. Longley and his Associate Rector even found enough children to build up the Sunday school—now known as the Church school. This includes the Guild of the Christ Child, and classes for nursery, kindergarten, primary, junior, and junior-senior high school children and their parents.

The Guild of the Christ Child is concerned with children from the time they are born until they are four years of age. As soon as the child arrives, the Associate Rector visits the parents, and enrolls the baby. Enrolment consists of presenting the family with a packet containing a letter of anticipation of the child's baptism, and thirteen leaflets having to do with his spiritual nurture in a Christian home. There is also a book list to guide parents in selected reading.

Parents meet on the second and fourth Sundays to discuss the basic problems of human life in the light of Christian faith.

Trinity Club and the younger student and teen-age groups are organized to give them the opportunity to enter more fully into the life of the church and the community—to worship God, hear and discuss topics of common interest and concern, create a bond of fellowship and better understanding, and make the members familiar with the application of Christian principles to the life and world of today.

Every Sunday evening during the year 1955-56, from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five young adults in



A GROUP OF YOUTH ACTIVITIES AT HOLY TRINITY



their twenties and thirties have met in the Parish House for supper at six o'clock, where they hear interesting speakers on many subjects touching the Christian faith, Christian practice, and present-day Christian frontiers.

At the eight-o'clock evening service the congregation is largely made up of these young people. The Holy Trinity choir has offered them a series of cantatas, with a commentary by the Associate Rector. On alternate Sundays, Trinity Club's own young adult choir, of twenty-five to thirty voices, has either presented anthems, or carried evening prayer for visiting choirs and choral groups. At the coffee hour following, nearly a hundred linger on until 10:30, to talk, sing around the piano, or play games.

Two new groups have been formed during this past year—a Glee Club of some twenty-eight members, and a Chancel Players group, numbering twenty-five, both meeting on Fridays for supper and rehearsal.

So The Church of The Holy Trinity is not only active, as it has always been, but is the center of an interesting youth movement that has brought many young adults into the church.

As we have noted earlier, it is difficult to write history which is still in the making; but Dr. Longley's loving interest in his flock, his tireless energy, and his plans for church fellowship and expansion, have already built up a full congregation in Holy Trinity.

He brought with him from his former parish in West Virginia an inspiring plan for "Loyalty Sunday" to start the yearly Every Member Canvass, when the congregation are all asked to be present in the church. There they find

in the pews pledge cards for their envelope-giving for the coming year. If anyone has good reason for not pledging a definite sum, he, or she, is asked to sign a "loyalty pledge" to the church, and these cards go into the collection plates with the money pledges.

It is a stirring sight, to be part of the ceremony of depositing these cards in the alms basins. The congregation, march, singing, following behind the choir to the chancel steps, where two alms basins are held by members of the Vestry, and there the cards are deposited in the basins, which are then placed on the altar.

This plan has now been tried in many churches, and almost everyone who has taken part in it, declares they would never willingly go back to the old method.

In the fall of 1956, a new room in the basement of the church, built as a memorial to Ruth Custis Kitchen, and known as the Centennial Room, was opened for our parish meetings, dinners, and various special events. It has a well-planned kitchen in connection with it, and certainly fills a real need in the social life of the church.

Holiday House, at Sellersville, has broadened its scope of activities to include the young adult groups, who love to vacation there.

In addition to all this, there is the newly formed Church Growth Committee, which is importantly concerned with welcoming newcomers and visitors, and interesting them, whenever possible, in the church life.

And so we come to the end of our first hundred years in His House. Looking ahead from where we stand, we can

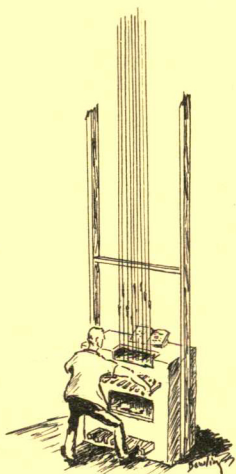
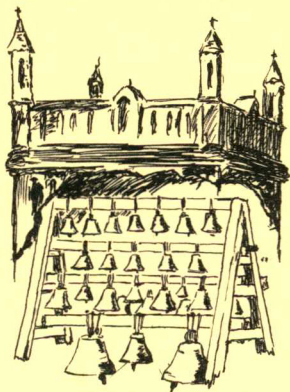
only guess at what the second hundred years will record in future Vestry Minutes, for this is truly a changing era in a changing world.

But though we cannot read the years leading up to our Bicentennial, we can be sure of one thing: that whatever the physical changes in our city, around our Square, and in the stone-and-mortar building of the church itself, the faith, courage, and will-to-work of that first little congregation gathered at the laying of the cornerstone in 1857, will continue to be woven into the pattern of our parish life.

It has been a good pattern, being not wholly of our own designing, and should endure as long as His House stands, and his children cross its threshold to renew their allegiance and bring their joys, griefs, and frustrations into His healing Presence.

It was for this that the House was built.





And this is how the
bells were played
when first placed in
the tower—

THE BELLS OF TRINITY

The chiming bells of Trinity
Ring out across the Square
Their glorious Christmas message
Upon the morning air,
Of peace, and joy, and happiness,
For Christ is everywhere.

The pealing bells of Trinity,
It seems as if they say,
The little town of Bethlehem
Is not so far away,
If we will open up our hearts,
And let Christ in today.

— CHARLES BANCROFT

*These verses have
been reprinted in
many publications,
and we feel privi-
leged to include
them here.*

EPILOGUE

TRINITY MUSIC DOWN THE YEARS



HERE has always been music in The Church of The Holy Trinity—music in which the congregation could, and did, take part.

Glancing back at the account in the hundred-year-old *Bulletin* of the first Sunday morning service in the new church, the reporter says: "The music under the direction of Mr. John A. Darling, the organist, was in excellent taste, consisting of the plain chants and well-known simple hymn tunes in which all the congregation could join."

The earliest choir was a quartet, and led the singing from the rear gallery. The first organist was the John Darling referred to in the *Bulletin* story, and following him came Lewis H. Redner, who was both organist and Rector's Warden.

It was Mr. Redner who wrote the music for Phillips Brooks's "O Little Town of Bethlehem," and there is a story to be told in connection with this.

The words were written in 1868 while Phillips Brooks was Rector of Holy Trinity, but the inspiration for them grew out of his visit to the Holy Land three years before, when he wrote to his family from Bethlehem: "Before dark we rode out of the town to the field where they say the shepherds saw the angel—as we passed, the shepherds were still 'keeping watch over the flocks' or leading them home."

Just before Christmas, 1868, the carol was completed, and Phillips Brooks asked his friend, Lewis Redner, to compose something simple for it which children could sing. He wanted it for the Christmas Sunday-school service, and it would have to be rehearsed on the following Sunday.

On Friday of that week he asked Mr. Redner anxiously, "Have you ground out that music yet?"

To which the latter replied, "No, but I'll have it by Sunday."

In the organist's own words, "On Saturday night my brain was all confused about the tune. I thought more about my Sunday-school lesson than I did about the music. But I was roused from sleep late in the night, hearing an angel-strain whispering in my ear, and seizing a piece of music paper I jotted down the treble of the tune as we now have it, and on Sunday morning before going to church I filled in the harmony."

Ralph Kinder, a later organist, once said of Mr. Redner, "As far as I know, he never had any special musical training, and that is one of the remarkable things about 'O Little Town of Bethlehem.' It was an inspired bit of music."

The console for the present chancel organ was given in Lewis Redner's memory.

The church's third organist was F. S. T. Darley, who served for several years as both organist and choirmaster, and in his time the first gallery organ was rebuilt and enlarged. In the Annual Report for 1873 we find that "The Music Committee of the church take pleasure in stating the rebuilding and enlargement of the organ has been completed.

The instrument is now a very valuable one—probably the largest in the city—and could not now be built for less than \$15,000. It has a very large variety of stops with great fullness and beauty of tone. The entire cost has been borne by a few persons, without any expense to the church.”

In 1880, costly repairs being needed to keep the organ in condition, the Vestry contracted with Mr. Hilborne L. Roosevelt, organ builder, for a new and improved instrument.

This was finished by Easter Sunday, permitting its use on that day for the first time. It was twenty-three feet across the front, twelve feet deep, and over thirty feet high, the case being of walnut, handsomely carved.

The organ had three manuals, and forty-two speaking stops of the most approved and beautiful tones, with 2664 pipes, and cost \$11,000.

Mr. Darley resigned in 1878, and was succeeded by Michael H. Cross, and the services of William H. Boner, who had been for years connected with the choir, were retained as assistant organist.

Mr. Cross served up to the time of his death, eighteen years later, when Edward B. Halsey became the church's next organist, with Charles Braun as choirmaster.

Once more referring to the Annual Report, this time dated 1899, we come upon this entry:

“In the summer, the engagements of the former choirmaster, organists, and choir ceased, and the present choir began their work September 1. An expression of gratitude to Mr. Charles A. Braun, Mr. Edward B. Halsey, and the choir of last year, is due and heartily given.

"Mr. Braun took the choir when they came downstairs to sing in the chancel, and the heartiness of the services and the harmony of the new arrangement bring him deserved credit . . . Mr. Halsey's playing upon the new organ, so largely planned by him, will cause him always to be remembered by The Church of The Holy Trinity . . . To Mr. Kinder and the new choir a hearty welcome is extended. The promise for the future in churchly and congregational music is good."

It was in the year 1897-98 that the long contemplated change was accomplished of moving the choir from the gallery to the chancel, and installing there a new and very complete organ at a cost of \$12,000.

This organ has "thirty-seven speaking stops (the gallery organ having forty-four), and is divided, having the great and pedal organs on the south side of the chancel, and the swell and choir organs on the north side. It was especially built for accompanying voices, careful attention being given to the diapasons, which are the foundation tones of all organs. The action is electropneumatic, this being essential in order to connect the gallery organ to the chancel console."

Ralph Kinder was organist at Holy Trinity for thirty-eight years. His Saturday afternoon organ recitals packed the church week after week, his programs appealing to all types of listeners. On one occasion a friend of his noticed a dock laborer in the audience near him, listening in rapt attention, and after the concert he talked to the man, finally asking him whether this was his first time at the recitals.

The reply was, "Oh, *no!* This is my one treat in the whole year."

Mr. Kinder was succeeded by Robert Elmore, who gave us seventeen years of fine musical leadership in the church.

After him we had a young organist, Eugene Roan, who unhappily only remained with us for a little less than a year, going from Holy Trinity to St. Thomas' Church in White-marsh in the fall of 1956. He is a brilliant musician, and everyone regretted his leaving us.

The present organist, Robert Knox Chapman, is already delighting the congregation with his music.

Having touched, all too briefly, on music *inside* the church, we come now to the story of the chimes which peal out the call to worship from the tower. These consist of twenty-five bells, cast in Louvain, Belgium, and given to the church by Mr. Joseph E. Temple, in 1880, as a memorial to his wife Martha.

Before being brought to this country, the bells were tested by Sir John Stainer (composer of "The Crucifixion"), who was Her Majesty's Inspector of Music, and organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

The larger bells have a medallion likeness of Mr. and Mrs. Temple, cast upon them, and this inscription:

Presented to The Church of The Holy Trinity,
Philadelphia, by Joseph E. Temple, in memory of
his wife, Martha Anna Kirtley. Born in England, May
11th, 1821. Died in Philadelphia Dec. 7th, 1864.

Cast by Severin Van Aerschodt
Louvain, Belgium. 1882

The bells arrived on the *S. S. Zeeland*, from Antwerp, on July 18, 1883, and a skilled machinist was sent with them to supervise the installation of the attachment connecting the clappers of the bells with the keyboard.

The bells were first rung at the opening session of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, which met on October 3, 1883, at Holy Trinity.

The man who is outstandingly associated with the chimes is Charles W. H. Bancroft, who was carillonneur for forty-five years. He is now, in this Centennial year, Secretary of the Vestry, and has given up the bells, but we suspect his heart is still up there in the tower when they peal out on Sunday mornings.

The chime of bells was restored in 1954 under the supervision of Professor Arthur L. Bigelow, Bellmaster of Princeton University, who played the carillon at the service of their dedication. This is the oldest carillon in use in the United States, and there were originally twenty-five bells in the chime. Ten were not restored, leaving fifteen which are now pealed by individual motors instead of, as formerly, by hand.

The restoration is a memorial to Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins.



One of the notable events of the Centennial year is this beautiful hand-wrought chalice made from silver given by the congregation in memory of family and friends. It is the work of Rear Admiral Jack Frank Bowling, U.S.N. (Retired).